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## **Stop punishing the homeless**

Here we go again, criminalizing these very poor folks without a home to go to. Their only "crime" is being too impoverished to afford the outrageously overpriced rents. Aren't these people being punished enough for having to live in these degrading conditions? It is not their fault that they live under this very dysfunctional free market gone wild, an economic system that has failed to include this whole segment of the population.

All it would take is a progressive tax on a tiny fraction of income at the top to enable a basic decent home for all. And the ultimate irony is that we are already spending that much, plus more on homeless shelters, emergency medical care, police enforcement, courts, prisons, etc., without solving the homeless problem. Federal studies have shown that the Housing First approach is the way to get folks back on their feet.

We can do the right thing and make sure no one goes without a place to call home, or we can continue to push these poor folks further into this homeless abyss, leaving us in disgrace with a big scar on our collective conscious.

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Council



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## **FW: 'Sit and Lie' not a good idea**

1 message

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**Steven Byron** <skyriak@live.com>

Wed, Sep 17, 2014 at 11:08 PM

To: "davidbcannell@gmail.com" <davidbcannell@gmail.com>

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From: skyriak@live.com

To: letters@staradvertiser.com

Subject: 'Sit and Lie' not a good idea

Date: Wed, 17 Sep 2014 23:07:03 -1000

**'Sit and Lie' Law: not a good idea**

**We in Hawaii go year after year talking about creating more 'affordable' housing, but, predictably, seem to always wind up with little or no progress, more complaints from businesses and tourists and residents --- and even greater demand.**

**The unfortunate results include ridiculous, discriminatory bills like the ones just passed outlawing lying down on sidewalks.**

**Really ? Let's finally get serious, right now, about building decent, affordable housing of all types for those in need.**

**If folks are so 'down-and-out', profoundly exhausted and confused that they're lying down ( and sleeping and relieving themselves ) on sidewalks, and if lawmakers are then writing and passing laws prohibiting it, very likely that means there probably needs to be a much more thorough and honest examination of the corruption and political failures that have gotten Hawaii to this sad point.**

**David B. Cannell**

## Homeless people need sleep just like we do

In the interest of homeless who are being swept away out of their tent homes for the crime of sleeping, I ask, where do they go to stay out of the rain while they sleep? If they are lucky, they get a space at a homeless shelter. Otherwise how are these people to get a good night's sleep? Last I heard, sleep is very important to health. Can that be denied to people? Sounds like a basic human right. How can sleeping be illegal?

Why can't we have designated campsites set aside for tent dwellers? After all, we have designated dog parks for dogs. Or are dogs more important than people without homes? Or maybe a tent city looks too much like a refugee camp, which is not a very pleasant, politically correct sight.

Where is the compassion and aloha for these very poor, vulnerable people? Are we not our brothers' keepers anymore? Or are we going to just keep trying to "sweep" the homeless away and hope they just disappear?

David Cannell  
Waipahu

## Give homeless respect, not more harassment

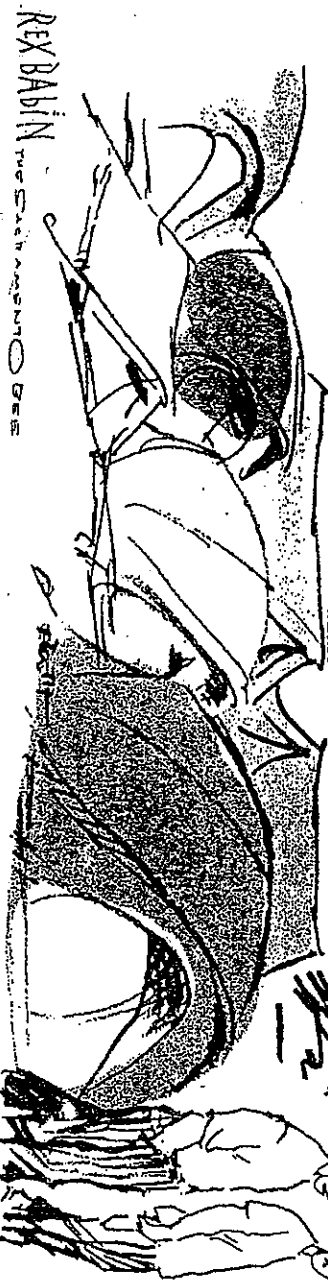
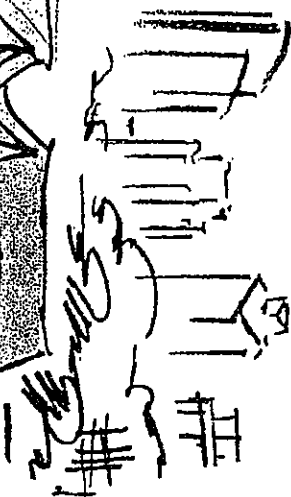
First, how can waking up the homeless in the middle of the night be "pono"? What harm do sleeping homeless people pose? Why are we criminalizing and demonizing folks that do not have a home to live in?

How can our state and city expect folks with total incomes amounting to less than the cost of rent to have safe, clean, dry places to sleep, much less money to eat?

Those who complain the most have no idea what it is like to be without a home. One really needs to walk many miles in "homeless shoes" and live a life "without." The homeless are not "bad" people, these are folks that need help to get back on their feet.

And above all, they need affordable decent housing. And don't think you can just go to one of the homeless shelters and check right in. They are entirely full most the time!

Let's show our aloha and treat people without homes just as you would like to be treated. Reach out with compassion and respect, treat them to a meal, give them some money, listen to their stories — you may come away with a whole new outlook.



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